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S P E E C H

OF

HON. WILLIAM B. STOKES,

OF TENNESSEE,

ON

THE STATE OF THE UNION.

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

FEBRUARY 1, 1861.

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The House having under consideration the report of the Select Committee of thirty-three—Mr. STOKES said :

Mr. SPEAKER: I feel that there is less necessity for me to address the House on the pending propositions, since I have heard the eloquent, unanswerable speech just made by the honorable gentleman from Texas, (Mr. HAMILTON;) but, as a Union man, as a lover of my whole country, I deem it my imperative duty to my immediate constituents and to the people of Tennessee to speak out frankly and fearlessly the earnest convictions of my heart, and to warn them of the dangers which lie before them. It is not my purpose to reply particularly to any of the various gentlemen who have preceded me in debate. I will seek no issues with any member. My desire is to do and contribute whatever I may toward the adjustment of the unhappy differences that afflict the country; to allay as far as possible the storm that howls about us, and to restore, as best we may, peace and harmony to the American people. I shall treat the questions at issue honestly, fairly, truthfully. I shall endeavor to speak the truth; yes, sir, the whole truth will I speak although the heavens fall. Gentlemen who have preceded me have indulged freely in crimination and recrimination. Each party has endeavored to affix all blame and responsibility on the other. Such a course I will not attempt to imitate. I propose to consider the alleged causes for the agitation and excitement under which this Union totters to its fall, for the country is shaken and convulsed as it never was before. A little more than a year ago it reposed in peace and prosperity. What has since occurred to distract and drive it to the verge of revolution and ruin? What are the causes of all this wild commotion and widespread alarm?

It is said, sir, that the Republican party is opposed to the further extension of slavery into

the free territories of the United States. This is true; and if I had the time I could read resolution after resolution adopted by the Democratic party of the northern States in conventions, and Legislatures in which they, too, declared it to be the duty of the Government to oppose the extension of slavery. Some Democratic conventions and Legislatures went so far as to declare it to be their ultimate design to *eradicate* slavery from the States where it now exists, by restricting its further extension, and such other lawful means as might finally lead to its *extinction*. If opposition to the further spread of slavery is *now* a cause for overthrowing the Government, was it not a sufficient cause *then* when the Democratic party had the control of it? But at that time our southern brethren, who have since seceded, stood shoulder to shoulder, cheek by jowl, with those very northern men, announcing that the northern Democracy were the only men in that section who were faithful to the rights of the South. I opposed these men then as now. I fought them with all my power. If, however, the refusal to permit the extension of slavery into free territories *then*, was not a cause for breaking up this Union, certainly it ought not to be so regarded now.

I begin with the State of Michigan, at that time one of the strongest and most reliable Democratic States in the Union. In 1847, her Legislature resolved :

“That, in the acquisition of any new territory, whether by purchase, conquest, or otherwise, we deem it the duty of the General Government to extend over the same the ordinance of 1787, with all its rights and privileges, conditions and immunitiess.”

In 1849, the following resolutions, offered by Hon. E. H. Thomson, were adopted :

“Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Michigan, That we consider the result of the late war with Mexico, in the acquisition of the Territories of New Mexico and California, as an enduring

monument to the honor of our gallant army, regulars and volunteers, officers and soldiers; and that we rejoice in the prospect of extending over that country the beneficent laws and institutions of a free people.

Resolved. That we are in favor of the fundamental principles of the ordinance of 1787; and although we respect the opinions of many eminent statesmen and jurists, that slavery is a mere local institution, which cannot exist without positive laws authorizing its existence, yet we believe that Congress has the power, and that it is their duty, to prohibit, by legislative enactment, the introduction or existence of slavery within any of the Territories of the United States, now or hereafter to be acquired.

Resolved. That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives requested, to use all honorable means to accomplish the objects expressed in the foregoing resolutions; and that the Governor of this State be requested to forward copies of these resolutions to our Senators and Representatives in Congress."

In the same year, the Democratic State Convention, which nominated a Governor and State officers, passed unanimously the following:

Resolved. That we are opposed to the extension of slavery into the Territories of New Mexico and California, believing them to be now free in virtue of the laws of Mexico, and that its establishment in either of those Territories ought to be prevented."

In the year 1847, the Legislature of New Hampshire, then largely Democratic, resolved:

"That in all territory which shall hereafter be added to, or acquired by, the United States, where slavery does not exist at the time of such addition or acquisition, neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except for the punishment of crime, whereof the party has been duly convicted, ought ever to exist, but the same should ever remain free; and we are opposed to the extension of slavery over any such territory; and that we also approve the vote of our Senators and Representatives in Congress in favor of the Wilmot proviso."

In 1848 the Legislature of that State, which had an overwhelming Democratic majority, resolved as follows:

"That we are in favor of the passage of a law, by Congress, forever prohibiting slavery in New Mexico and California, and in all other Territories now acquired, or hereafter to be acquired, by the United States, in which slavery does not exist at the time of such acquisition."

And in 1849, the New Hampshire Legislature, still strongly Democratic, unanimously adopted the following resolutions:

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives, in General Court, convened. That, opposed to every form of oppression, the people of New Hampshire have ever viewed with deep regret the existence of slavery in this Union; that while they have steadfastly supported all sections in their constitutional rights, they have not only lamented its existence as a great social evil, but regarded it as fraught with danger to the peace and welfare of the nation.

Resolved. That while we respect the rights of the slaveholding as well as the free portion of this Union, while we will not willingly consent that wrong be done to any member of the glorious Confederacy to which we belong, we are firmly and unalterably opposed to the extension of slavery over any portion of American soil now free.

Resolved. That, in our opinion, Congress has the constitutional power to abolish the slave trade, and slavery in the District of Columbia; and that our Senators be instructed, and our Representatives be requested, to take all constitutional measures to accomplish these objects."

The Democratic State Committee of New Hampshire, in October, 1847, passed the following resolution:

Resolved. That we declare it our solemn conviction, as the Democratic party have heretofore done, that neither slavery nor involuntary servitude should hereafter exist in any territory which may be required by, or annexed to, the United States; and that we approve of the

votes of our delegation in Congress in favor of the Wilmot proviso."

In the year 1847, resolutions were passed by the Legislature of Rhode Island—

"Against the acquisition of territory, by conquest or otherwise, beyond the present limits of the United States, for the purpose of establishing therein slaveholding States," &c.

By the Legislature of New York:

"That if any territory is hereafter acquired by the United States, or annexed thereto, the act by which such territory is acquired or annexed, whatever such act may be, should contain an unalterable fundamental article or provision, whereby slavery or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, shall be forever excluded from the territory acquired or annexed."

By the Legislature of New Jersey:

"That the Senators, &c., be requested to use their best efforts to secure, as a fundamental provision to, or provision in, any act of annexation of any territory hereafter to be acquired by the United States, &c., that slavery or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, shall be forever excluded from the territory to be annexed."

By the Legislature of Pennsylvania:

"Against any measure whatever, by which territory will accrue to the Union, unless as a part of the fundamental law, upon which any compact or treaty for this purpose is based, slavery or involuntary servitude, except for crime, shall be forever excluded."

By the Legislature of Ohio:

"For the passage of measures in that body, [Congress,] providing for the exclusion of slavery from the Territory of Oregon, and also from any other Territory that now is, or hereafter may be, annexed to the United States."

By the Legislature of Vermont:

"Against the admission into the Federal Union of any new State whose Constitution tolerates slavery."

By the Legislature of Connecticut:

"That if any Territory shall hereafter be acquired by the United States, or annexed thereto, the act by which such Territory is acquired or annexed, whatever such act may be, should contain an unalterable fundamental article or provision whereby slavery or involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime, shall be forever excluded from the Territory acquired or annexed."

And in 1850, the following:

"Whereas the people of Connecticut have heretofore, through their Senators and Representatives in General Assembly convened, solemnly and deliberately avowed their purpose to resist, in all constitutional and proper ways, the extension of slavery into the national Territories, and the admission of new slave States into the Federal Union; and also to seek, in a peaceable and constitutional way, the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery in the District of Columbia; and whereas the important question now before the country touching these matters makes it desirable that these convictions and determinations should be reaffirmed in the most solemn and public manner: Therefore,

Resolved. That Congress has full constitutional power to prohibit slavery in the Territories of the United States by legislative enactment, and that it is the duty of Congress to pass, without unnecessary delay, such strict and positive laws as will effectually shut out slavery from every portion of these Territories."

By the Legislature of Massachusetts, in 1849:

Resolved. That Congress has full power to legislate upon the subject of slavery in the Territories of the Union; that it has freely exercised such power from the adoption of the Constitution to the present time; and that it is its duty to exercise the power for the perpetual extinction of the institution from those Territories that are free, and for the extinction of the same in Territories where it exists."

Resolved. That, when Congress furnishes govern-

ments for the Territories of California and New Mexico, it will be its duty to establish therein the fundamental principle of the ordinance of 1787 upon the subject of slavery, to the end that the institution may be perpetually excluded therefrom, beyond every chance and uncertainty."

At a State Convention of the Democratic party in Massachusetts, composed of more than six hundred members, in 1849, the following resolutions, introduced by Hon. B. F. Hallett, then chairman of the National Democratic Committee, and of the State Democratic Committee, were adopted unanimously, as appears from the *Boston Post*, the organ of the party in New England:

"Resolved, That we are opposed to slavery in every form and color, and in favor of freedom and free soil wherever man lives, throughout God's heritage."

"Resolved, That, by common law and common sense, as well as by the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, (in *Prigg vs. Pennsylvania*, 16 Peters,) 'the state of slavery is a mere municipal regulation, founded upon and limited to the verge of the territorial law; that is, the limits of the State creating it.'

"Resolved, therefore, That, as slavery does not exist by any municipal law in the new Territories, and Congress has no power to institute it, the local laws of any State authorizing slavery can never be transported there; nor can slavery exist there but by a local law of the Territories, sanctioned by Congress."

This, sir, is pretty good Republican doctrine, coming from high Democratic authority.

In 1848, the Legislature of Ohio resolved:

"That the provisions of the ordinance of Congress of 1787, so far as the same relates to slavery, should be extended to any territory that may be acquired from Mexico by treaty or otherwise."

In 1849, Illinois resolved:

"That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives requested, to use all honorable means in their power to procure the enactment of such laws by Congress for the government of the countries and Territories of the United States, acquired by the treaty of peace, friendship, limits, and settlement, with the Republic of Mexico, concluded February 2, A. D. 1848, as shall contain the express declaration 'that there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in said Territories, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.'

The same year, the following was adopted in Wisconsin:

"That our Senators in Congress be, and they are hereby, instructed, and our Representatives requested, first, to oppose the passage of any act for the government of New Mexico and California, or any other Territory now belonging to the United States, or which may hereafter be acquired, unless it shall contain a provision forever prohibiting the introduction of slavery or involuntary servitude into said Territories, except as a punishment for crimes; second, to oppose the admission of any more slave States into the Federal Union."

In 1850, the following was adopted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:

"That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives requested, so to cast their votes and extend their influence as to have engratated upon any law that may be passed for the organization of the Territory recently acquired from Mexico, a provision forever excluding from such territory slavery and involuntary servitude, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes, whereof the party has been duly convicted."

By the Legislature of New York:

"Resolved, That the determination indicated by the Governors' messages and resolutions of the Legislatures of various of the slaveholding States, and by the Representatives of such States in Congress, to extend domestic

slavery over the territory acquired by the late treaty of peace with the Republic of Mexico, we feel bound to oppose by all constitutional means; and recognising the constitutional power of Congress to prohibit, by positive enactment, the extension of slavery into free territory, our Senators in Congress are hereby instructed, and our Representatives requested to use their best efforts to insert such a positive prohibition into any law they may pass for the government of the Territories in question."

In 1847, Governor Dana, of Maine, a prominent Democrat, in his message to the Legislature, in speaking of the *right* of slaveholders to hold their slaves in the Territories, said:

"On the other hand, the slave States claim that this territory will be acquired, if acquired at all, by the blood and treasure of all the States of the Union, to become the joint property of all; to be held for the benefit of all. And they emphatically ask, 'is it consistent with justice?' His right to acquire and possess property is one of the inherent rights of man, independent of laws and Constitutions. Not so with the right to his slave; that is an unnatural, an artificial, a statute right; and when he voluntarily passes with a slave to a Territory, where the statute recognizing the right does not exist, then at once the right ceases to exist. The slave becomes a free man, with just as much right to claim the master, as the master to claim the slave."

In 1849, the Democratic party in Maine held a State Convention, at which Hon. John Hubbard was nominated for Governor. This Convention was composed of six hundred delegates, at which the following resolution was passed, only one solitary member voting against it:

"Resolved, That the institution of human slavery is at variance with the theory of our Government, abhorrent to the common sentiment of mankind, and fraught with danger to all who come within the sphere of its influence; that the Federal Government possesses adequate power to inhibit its existence in the Territories of the Union; that the constitutionality of this power to inhibit its existence in the Territories of the Union; that the constitutionality of this power has been settled by judicial construction, by contemporaneous expositions, and by repeated acts of legislation; and that we enjoin upon our Senators and Representatives in Congress to make every exertion, and employ all their influence, to procure the passage of a law forever excluding slavery from the Territories of California and New Mexico."

And the Legislature, largely Democratic, passed the following:

"Resolved, That the sentiment of this State is profound, sincere, and almost universal; that the influence of slavery upon productive energy is like the blight of mildew; that it is a moral and social evil; that it does violence to the rights of man, as a thinking, reasonable, and responsible being. Influenced by such considerations, this State will oppose the introduction of slavery into any territory which may be acquired as an indemnity for claims upon Mexico."

At a State convention in Pennsylvania, Colonel Samuel Black, of Pittsburgh, offered the following resolution, which was adopted unanimously:

"Resolved, That the Democratic party adheres now, as it ever has done, to the Constitution of the country. Its letter and spirit they will neither weaken nor destroy; and they re-eclect that slavery is a domestic local institution of the South, subject to State legislation alone, and with which the General Government has nothing to do. Wherever the State law extends its jurisdiction, the local institution can continue to exist. Esteeming it a violation of State rights to carry it beyond State limits, we deny the power of any citizen to extend the area of bondage beyond its present dominion; nor do we consider it a part of the compromises of the Constitution that slavery should forever travel with the advancing columns of our territorial progress."

This same Colonel Black is now Governor of Nebraska, and recently vetoed a bill, which had

been passed by the Legislature, prohibiting slavery in that Territory. The exact progress of Democracy in eleven years is here made quite apparent.

The Democratic members of the Legislature of the State of New York, in 1848, in a series of resolutions, included the following:

Resolved, That while the Democracy of New York will faithfully adhere to all the compromises of the Constitution, and maintain all the reserved rights of the States, they declare—since the crisis has arrived when that question must be met—their uncompromising hostility to the extension of slavery in territory now free, which has been or may be hereafter acquired by any action of the Government of the United States."

Similar resolutions were adopted the same year at Utica, in which Hon. John Van Buren and Hon. John Cochrane participated.

At a State convention of the Democratic party of Ohio, in the year 1848, the following resolution was adopted:

Resolved, That the people of Ohio now, as they have always done, looking upon the institution of slavery as an evil, unfavorable to the full development of our institutions; and that, entertaining these sentiments, they will feel it to be their duty to use all the powers consistent with the national compact to prevent its increase, to mitigate, and finally to *extirpate* it."

It is said by gentlemen on the other side that, because we refer to these and other similar facts, we thereby defend the Republican party. Such imputation will not restrain me from my duty, nor cause me to withhold such unquestioned facts as are a part of the political history of the country. At a time like this the public welfare should be above all parties or party interests. I am not the apologist of any party, yet I would willingly do justice to all.

Mr. Speaker, the southern States which have seceded declare that they are separate and distinct sovereignties, because of their alleged withdrawal from this Union. Sir, the right of secession I will not discuss at this time, for I have already placed myself on record in regard to it in some remarks I made during the last session. Now, I need only say that if a State has any right to withdraw from the Union, it is the right, not of secession, but of revolution. A constitutional right of secession is a monstrous paradox. Every State, however, that has suffered oppression or tyranny until it is no longer tolerable, has the inalienable right to protect itself, and, if needs be, to resort to that remedy which is above all constitutions—the right of revolution.

I shall not now further discuss the question of secession. I concur in opinion with the gentleman from Texas, (Mr. HAMILTON,) in the opinion just expressed by him, that no State can rightfully or constitutionally secede without the consent of the other States. I have been taught to believe that the doctrines and opinions of Washington, Madison, Jefferson, and Jackson were right, and I find no sufficient reason for abandoning them now. On the contrary, I find in the events of the day much to cause me to adhere more closely to their teachings.

Mr. Speaker, six States have passed ordinances declaring themselves free and independent sovereignties; and what do we find to be the fruits of this "peaceable" right of secession? Forts,

arsenals, dock-yards, arms and munitions of war, public monies and property of various descriptions belonging to the United States have been seized by lawless mobs and bands of armed men. Not only that. The flag—the flag of Tennessee as well as of Pennsylvania—the flag of all the States—has been grossly insulted and fired upon as it waved over an unarmed ship bearing provisions to our own soldiers, in the service of the Government, while occupying and defending the property of the United States. In doing this, these seceding States, or the armed bodies of men who perpetrated these outrages, have been guilty of a violation of the laws of the land, and have made open war against the United States, as I will show. And they have violated and defied the plainest provisions of the Constitution.

I will read a few clauses from the Constitution. Section ten, article first, of the Constitution, says:

"No State shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confederation." * * * "No State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any duty of tonnage, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, enter into any agreement or compact with another State, or with a foreign power."

Article six, section three, says:

"The Senators and Representatives * * * shall be bound by oath or affirmation to support this Constitution," which is elsewhere declared to be "*the supreme law of the land*."

Now, Mr. Speaker, when I came to this Congress, and after a struggle of two months in organizing the House, I repaired to that desk and took a solemn oath to support the Constitution and the laws passed in pursuance thereof; and, sir, I say here in my place, that there is no power on earth that can ever induce or force me to utter one word or do any act whatever in any way that will aid any State in going out of the Union. On the contrary, I intend to keep that oath faithfully and honestly as a member of this House; and I hope and trust I shall be able to keep it and live up to it, so long as I remain upon the earth.

I say I will do nothing nor say anything which will encourage any State to secede from this Union. But yesterday I saw it announced in the *Memphis Avalanche* and the *Memphis Appeal*, papers published in my own State, that the Mississippi river was blockaded. This is but another of the evil fruits of secession. We find, also, in an ordinance just passed by one of the seceding States, Louisiana, a resolution which reads as follows:

"That we, the people of Louisiana, recognize the free navigation of the Mississippi river and its tributaries by all friendly States bordering thereon."

What does all this mean? I understand from it that all the States which are *friendly to secession*, or which shall secede hereafter, may freely navigate the Mississippi river. I represent a constituency that has an interest in the free navigation of that great Father of Waters and all its tributaries. A portion of my constituents reside upon streams which are tributary to the Mississippi, and they are interested in the navigation of that river. Now, I say here, that I do not believe Tennessee will secede. I hope she will not; and I intend to do all in my power to pre-

vent her doing so. And should she remain in the Union, as her interests constrain her to do, the waters of the Mississippi must be kept free to all the people of that State.

Mr. RUST. The gentleman says the Mississippi is blockaded.

Mr. STOKES. I told the gentleman my authority was the *Memphis Avalanche* and the *Appeal*, both Democratic, disunion newspapers.

Mr. RUST. You did not quote the paragraphs from those papers. I deny that the Mississippi is blockaded.

Mr. STOKES. But here is the ordinance of Louisiana, which declares that the Mississippi shall be free to all States which are *friendly* to them. Of course it is not to be free to those States which are *unfriendly*.

Sir, while both sides of the House are trying to compromise and heal our unhappy difficulties, I am free to say that I, for one, will vote for any compromise which may be put forward competent to meet the crisis through which the country is now passing. I care little about myself politically, because I want no political honors unless I can have them in the Union, and under the stars and stripes of my whole country. (Applause in the galleries.) How, I ask, can we heal these difficulties? One of my colleagues, (Mr. THOMAS,) has said that we can "be content with no adjustment that will not unite the South with us." Now, I appeal to gentlemen here and ask them how is it possible that we can agree upon any terms which will, at this time, bring back South Carolina when she has declared emphatically that she will not come back upon any terms whatever, and that her secession from this Union is final and forever. Then a compromise, which shall be now satisfactory to South Carolina, and, perhaps, other of the cotton States, is impossible. I saw to-day, in the *Richmond Whig*, an extract taken from the *Charleston Mercury* to the same effect, stating that she does not intend to accept any compromise, and does not intend to return to her allegiance to the Federal Union.

These cotton States have gone out and severed their connection with the Federal Government, as they say, and for what? What are their grievances?

First. They allege that the North has passed personal liberty bills.

Second. That the fugitive slave law has not been faithfully executed.

Third. That the Republican party is opposed to the further extension of slavery into the free Territories.

Fourth. That the Republican party intend to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and in the dock-yards, arsenals, and navy yards, under the exclusive jurisdiction of the United States.

Fifth. That they intend finally to abolish slavery in the States.

Sixth. That the Republican party hates slavery; that Garrison, Phillips and others de-

nounce slavery, and that we are in danger of invasions similar to that which John Brown made upon the soil of Virginia.

You are all familiar with the John Brown affair; but we know that no party in the North, unless it be the few radical Abolitionists, justifies the conduct of John Brown. Then there was the alleged burnings of habitations and villages in Texas during the last year. An intelligent gentleman, long a resident of Texas, a few days ago, furnished me with a map and other particulars concerning these fires in Texas. From him I learned that most of them occurred many miles apart, on the same day and about the same hour of the day, to wit: at two o'clock, p. m., on the 8th of August last, when the thermometer was standing at 113°. From information derived from him, I am satisfied that these fires were not the work of incendiaries, yet it is charged that the North are sending their missionaries out there to burn up and destroy the property and habitations of the people of that State.

Another grievance complained of is the election of Lincoln by a sectional party. He, it is said, has no sympathy with the South, and therefore we are justified in precipitating a dissolution of the Union. It is said that Lincoln will oppose the further extension of slavery into Territories which are now free. Let me here read an extract from a speech of Mr. Buchanan, now President of the United States, which he made upon the proposition for the admission of Texas. "He said:

"In arriving at the conclusion to support this treaty, (the annexation of Texas,) I had to encounter but one serious obstacle, and this was the question of slavery. Whilst I ever maintained, and ever shall maintain in their full force and vigor, the constitutional rights of the southern States over their slave property, I yet feel a strong repugnance by any act of mine to extend the present limits of the Union over a new slaveholding Territory. After mature reflection, however, I overcame these scruples, and now believe that the acquisition of Texas will be the means of limiting the domain of slavery." * * * "That the acquisition of Texas would, ere long, convert Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, and probably others of the more northern slave States into free States—I entertain not a doubt."

I ask, then, if opposition to the extension of slavery is a cause for a dissolution of the Union, why it was not done when Mr. Buchanan was elected? for this extract proves him to have been as much opposed to the extension of slavery as it was possible for him to be. I say it was no sufficient cause when Mr. Buchanan was elected, and it furnishes only a pretext now.

Six States have already seceded, and one member from another State, (Mr. REAGAN,) has gone home to the State of Texas. Thirty-one southern members of this House have retired from this Hall, and twelve Senators have vacated their seats in the Senate. They have left us, their southern brethren, to fight the battle alone. Now, although Mr. Lincoln is elected, it is well known to this House and to the country, that had those gentlemen remained in their seats, and stood to their posts like men and patriots, not one dollar could the administration of Mr. Lincoln get out of the Treasury, unless by the consent of an opposition House and a Democratic

Senate. He could not have formed his Cabinet, or even appointed a Minister, or a Consul, without the consent of the Democratic Senate. Suppose, then, that they had stood their ground and remained like men, as I think they ought to have done, what would have been the effect of it? Why, sir, if we had exercised our constitutional power in stopping supplies, and in refusing to confirm presidential appointments, we could have prevented any unconstitutional interference with our rights, had such interference been attempted by the incoming Administration. And with this power in our own hands, it might have been used not only to prevent usurpation, but so as to have secured an unequivocal acknowledgment of all our just rights under the Constitution. To this we might have compelled the Republicans to accede, had our representatives remained in their places. We could have decided to present to the people of the North and the South such amendments to the Constitution or other guarantees as we thought proper. We could have asked that these propositions be referred to the people of all the States, in the mode prescribed by the Constitution. We could thus have invoked the action of the people in whose willingness to do right, I have every confidence; and if the Republican party had refused to transfer the whole matter to the States and the people, or to come to some such reasonable terms of adjustment, we might have exercised the power of stopping the supplies; have refused to vote one dollar for carrying on this Government. But, now, instead of having such power, we are left in a minority by the withdrawal of thirty-one members from the House, and twelve from the Senate. And it now is in the power of the Republican party to refuse us whatever they choose, and yield us only whatever they are willing to accord.

Sir, a convention is to be held soon in Tennessee, in which the State, which I in part represent, is to decide whether she will go out of the Union. We are invited by the disunionists to follow them into this Southern Confederacy. I, for one, enter my solemn protest against any such suicidal conduct. I will never agree to any such an act of folly. What, sir, go into Southern Confederacy; ally ourselves with the cotton States, after they have abandoned us here, after they have been faithless to us here, when, had they remained, we had the power of self-defence in our hands! If they would not stand by us under existing circumstances, can we rely upon them when we shall have joined ourselves to their Southern Confederacy? We cannot. Faithless now, faithless they would be then. Should they see any cause to be hereafter dissatisfied, they would doubtless come forward with another secession ordinance and withdraw from the Southern Confederacy. And where would we then stand?

Why, sir, we are solemnly informed by them, that they will not agree to any compromise. But, what else do we find? Some time ago, in the Charleston Secession Convention, we find Mr. Packer holding this language. Speaking of the motive or reason which induced South Carolina to attempt breaking up the Government, he said:

"It is no spasmodic effort that has come suddenly upon us, but it has been gradually culminating for a long series of years."

Mr. Ingles, also, said at the same time;

"Most of us have had this subject under consideration for the last twenty years."

Mr. Keitt, another member of the convention, and for the last eight years a member of this House, said:

"I have been engaged in this movement ever since I entered political life."

Mr. Rhett, another member of the convention, said:

"It is nothing produced by Mr. Lincoln's election, or the non-execution of the fugitive slave law. It is a matter that has been gathering head for thirty years." * * * "We are about to sunder our relations with that section, (the North,) and, I trust, forever."

And, yet, he now asks Tennessee to join that Southern Confederacy, of which he is to be a controlling spirit. I again say there is no earthly power that can compel my consent to it.

Are these causes, I again ask, sufficient for the dissolution of the Union? If they are, then they exist outside of the election of Mr. Lincoln to the presidency. And if they exist outside of Mr. Lincoln's election—and I have shown you they have existed for years—then Mr. Douglas, Mr. Bell, or Mr. Breckinridge, could no more have kept the Union together than Mr. Lincoln can. But, if this movement goes merely upon the election of Mr. Lincoln, then, I say, it is too ridiculous to talk about. The present leading disunionists in my State, last summer, all promptly and earnestly insisted that the election of Mr. Lincoln was no cause for destroying the Federal Government.

These grievances, if grievances there be, existed for years past, and it was in the power of this Democratic party to have remedied them if they chose. They had majorities in both Houses last Congress. All the territorial laws are to-day precisely as they were then, and as they passed them. If objectionable, why were they not changed when the Democratic party had control of both Houses of Congress, the Executive and the Judiciary? Why did not some gentleman propose to remedy them? Show me the motion on the journal of this House, or any proposition that any southern man brought before Congress, to change our present territorial policy in regard to the slavery question. It cannot be done. The slavery question in the States and Territories is precisely where the Democratic party placed it, and where they have the power to maintain it. To do this they have only to remain in their places, and the Republican party are powerless in both Houses of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we have grievances to complain of, and I intend to show my Republican friends that we have just cause to complain of them for some of their acts; and I trust and hope that they will see the necessity of taking such action here, and in the Northern States, as may allay the public excitement and tranquilize the popular mind.

I was speaking of the election of Lincoln. Sir, there were various causes why he was elected.

There were several candidates. Millions were supporting Mr. Douglas for his devotion to the doctrine of non-intervention; others supported Mr. Breckinridge, and subscribed to the new code of protection to slavery in the territories; while the Union party rallied under the leadership of Mr. Bell, pledged to "the Union, the Constitution, and the enforcement of the laws." What else? One of the most powerful causes of all was the extravagance, the waste, the profligacy, and, I think I can safely say, the corruptions of the present Administration. These things, alone, caused thousands of the people of the country to record their votes for Mr. Lincoln for the Presidency, who would not otherwise have voted for him.

I contend, sir, that the election of Mr. Lincoln, under these circumstances, is no reason for a dissolution of the Union. I think disunion can be fairly traced to the purposes and plans of the Southern League—which was concocted and deliberately agreed upon, over two years ago, by the leaders of the Democratic party in the Cotton States—that they would go to Charleston and make certain demands on the Northern Democrats; and, if refused, that they would set up a candidate of their own, and, when defeated, as they expected and desired to be, then to strike for a Southern Confederacy. They have publicly declared that their purpose was ultimately to build up a Southern Confederacy upon the ruins of the present Union; to reopen the slave trade, conquer Mexico, and annex Cuba, if in their power to do so. They expect, or desire, to accomplish all this; and, as it could not be attempted within the Union, secession became necessary before they could attempt this long cherished purpose. They expect the border States, with Tennessee and North Carolina, to follow them in this wild crusade. Their purpose is to commit the whole South to this wild, revolutionary scheme; and so they have declared over and over again.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot, I will not consent to become a blind follower of those who boast that, for years, they have had no other or higher aim than the destruction of my country; and I make the assertion here in my place, without fear of being contradicted, that there is not one grievance complained of that cannot be remedied in the Union: nor is there one which can be remedied *out of it*. I desire my constituents to know that their best interests are in imminent peril, and that their peace and safety depends in standing by that Union which has blessed them, and avoiding secession and disunion as the grave of their happiness and prosperity. The idea that a few conspiring madmen, ambitious, disappointed politicians, men who are seeking for power, can band themselves together and say this Union must be destroyed at their bidding, is monstrous. So bold have become the advocates of this doctrine of secession, that if a gentleman now expresses himself in favor of the Union, and denies the wisdom or constitutional right of secession, he is denounced as a "submissionist." I am free to say, sir, that I had rather be called a "submissionist"—a submissionist to the laws of

my country—than act as other have done: play the part of a traitor, and become a rebel to a Government which never wronged me, and to which I owe my allegiance. *I am a submissionist.* I stand here in the presence of these Representatives of the people and proudly admit that I am a submissionist; I do not submit—I have sworn to do so—to the Constitution and to the laws passed in pursuance thereof. I intend to submit to them. I intend to stand, in the future as in the past, on the Union platform adopted at Baltimore last summer—"the Union, the Constitution, and the Enforcement of the Laws." (Applause.) But, say gentlemen, enforcement of the law is coercion; and the cry of coercion is got up in the South. They ask: "Will you coerce a State?" No, sir, I am not for *coercing a State*. But I claim the right and power of the General Government to execute its laws whenever it is expedient to do it—or necessary for the safety, the protection, and happiness of the people of all the States—in a word, when the public welfare requires it. I repeat, I am not for coercing a State, and at the same time I am not for allowing a State to coerce me. I do not recognize the right of the State of South Carolina to coerce the rest of the States. She has no right to do so, and I protest against it. I think, however, that moderation, prudence and caution, ought to be used on the part of the President. Let us settle these difficulties, peaceably if we can. It can be done, and my opinion is that it will be done—satisfactorily to reasonable men everywhere—at least satisfactorily to the border States, and Tennessee and North Carolina. I have no idea of any settlement being made that will now satisfy the State of South Carolina. I do not look for that. I do not expect it; for South Carolina has declared emphatically that she will accept no compromise, and will have none—that her separation is final and forever. But I do hope and believe that all difficulties will be settled so as to satisfy the people of the border States.

But we are told that we must go out of the Union. Yes, sir, Yancey said that, two years ago. He laid the plan, and it has worked admirably. It has moved like clock-work. That clock above me is not arranged with greater precision than was this southern league. Here in this city were its chiefs, some of them at the head of various departments of the Government, assiduously working to accomplish a treasonable destruction of the Union, and to subvert the very Constitution which they were sworn to support. Yes, sir, they have done all this. Mr. Yancey had his plan laid out last summer. Mr. Breckinridge was his candidate. Mr. Bell was the candidate of the Union party; and here I will remark that I have found but one man in my section of the country who was opposed to the execution of the laws. He was an old fellow who had repeatedly been stalled in the calaboose. I asked him to support Mr. Bell. Said he, "I like Mr. Bell very well, and I like the Constitution and the Union very well—but damn the enforcement of the laws." (Laughter.) Mr. Yancey and these seceders, who met at Richmond and nominated JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE, declared their pur-

pose to be to rule the country according to their theories, or to break up this Government; and when any one suggested the idea that the supporters of Breckinridge were disunionists, they indignantly denied it. They declared that every insinuation of that kind was a libel upon Mr. Breckinridge and the Democratic party.

I proclaimed it everywhere, during last year, that if Abraham Lincoln was elected, the disunionists intended to make an effort to overthrow the Government. I had frequently heard them say so upon this floor during the last session of Congress. I proved by their own words that such was their ultimate design, and that, in the event of the election of a Republican President, such would be the result. Yet, they denied it before the people. They declared that no such criminal intention or scheme existed. Had the honest people of Tennessee understood that such was the intention of these Democrats and disunionists in the event of the election of Lincoln; had it been so understood everywhere in the South, Breckinridge would have been beaten—overwhelmingly defeated—in States and communities where he was most earnestly supported. He would have been defeated overwhelmingly by the Union-loving masses of the country everywhere. But it was denied by his supporters; they denounced the charge as an infamous slander. But history proves that we were not mistaken. Everywhere around us we meet the evidences of a desp-laid conspiracy, having for its unholy object the destruction of the best Government which has ever been vouchsafed to man.

Why, Mr. Speaker, there is a number of disunion Democrats in my section of country who have taken upon themselves a sort of paternal care and supervision of the rights of the South. They have established a standard by which they test our sectional loyalty, and that standard requires us to come out and denounce the Republican party as guilty of lying, treason, and every other crime known to the criminal code; and if we do not, we are submissionists, and Abolitionists. I shall be charged, no doubt, when the remarks I am now submitting to the House are published, with being a submissionist. But the men who make these charges are not generally those who own slave property, which they have purchased by labor and industry. No, sir; they are, as a general rule, those who own neither slaves nor anything else, and who never will own anything, for they have nothing now, and are too lazy to work for anything. (Laughter.) Yet they assume to supervise the interests of the slaveholders, and to take care of their property. But, sir, there is another class of people in my State, composed of honest, hard-working men. The farmers, the mechanics, the merchants, and professional men, who are loyal to the Constitution and the Union, and who are now moving Heaven and earth to arrest the tide of disunion, and, if possible, to save this country from destruction, and this Government from final overthrow. Nor will I omit the old soldiers, who are pensioners upon your bounty, and whose means of subsistence depends upon the preservation of that Government which owes its existence to their

valor. They are now at work in the border States, working with a will and energy such as has never been displayed by them; with a will and resolution known only to those who feel that their liberties and their country are involved. They love their country for its blessings; they love this Government because it has protected them, and they will not be driven from its protecting flag at the bidding of disunion. And I should be untrue to myself and to them if I were not to raise my voice with theirs against this wicked scheme of my country's enemies.

Mr. HINDMAN made a remark which was not heard by the reporter.

Mr. STOKES. I cannot yield. I say we are straining every nerve to beat back the tide of secession and disunion in the border States; and while I have faith in the good sense of the people, I shall not permit myself, for a moment, to despair.

I understand that the most earnest and patriotic efforts are being made in seven, at least, of the slaveholding States, and I will not, as I said, doubt the result. I can except Arkansas, if the gentleman wishes me to do so.

Mr. HINDMAN again made a remark which the reporter did not understand.

Mr. STOKES. Kentucky and Tennessee are closely linked together by affection and interest. Whatever misfortune falls upon Kentucky, falls also upon Tennessee. We are, then, struggling together, and our joint efforts will be directed to doing all we can to hold this Union together, and finally to rescue our whole country from the perils which environ it.

Mr. Speaker, I speak what I am saying because it is my duty. I speak, as I said, for the farmer; for the old soldier; I speak for the mechanic, and for the child of toil; I speak, also, for my wife and my children; I speak no less for my slaves, when I plead for the preservation of my country, for its destruction will involve all, finally, in one common ruin.

Gentlemen, I implore you in the name of Heaven to come to the rescue of our country. Forget your party prejudices while you do something that will strengthen the hands of the Union-loving men everywhere—something which, without injustice to any one, will enable us to beat back the armies of disunion, and to reunite the bonds which have so long held us together a happy and united people. For I believe that nothing less than the preservation of the Union can avert the ultimate horrors of civil war, and the consequent destruction of all that is most dear to those who have homes and families to cherish and defend.

Mr. Speaker, it has been sometimes said that I am not a friend to the South. Why? I suppose it is because I will not agree to go with South Carolina in her mad career of destruction. Sir, I have spoken here to-day because I feel that I love my native South. I love the land of my birth, and the abode of my kindred. I love my people; and in my judgment, the only way to preserve and protect their property, and to preserve

the peace and happiness of all, is to keep this Union together, and live united like brethren.

Whenever you dissolve the Union, you bring, as a necessary result, the Canada line down to our borders, and you thereby increase the facilities for the escape of our slaves. And when they reach an independent, and perhaps a hostile country, how will you reclaim them? With the distance that there is now intervening, they sometimes escape, and they will continue to do so in all coming time. But, sir, I repeat, that when you dissolve the Union, you establish a hostile border three thousand miles in length, touching the boundaries of Maryland, of Virginia, of Kentucky, of Delaware, of Missouri, and even of Texas.

But, again: I say to the southern people, that we now have millions of friends at the North who are loyal to the Constitution and the laws, and who have, through weal and through woe, stood up for our rights—friends outside the Republican party, and friends within that party; friends who are willing to live up to the requirements of the Constitution, and who, if we will be but patient, can and will effectually aid us in securing all our just rights and reasonable demands. Then, I want my constituents to know, that when they break up this Government, they not only aggravate every real or imaginary grievance, but we are necessarily alienated and estranged from our friends and kindred in the North, who are willing now and at all times, if needs be, to rush to our defence; but we shall have then made them our enemies. I implore gentlemen, then, to heal and harmonize these difficulties now, while we may, while we are here together as friends and as brothers, and while each and all of us have still an interest in this glorious Union. If we cannot do it now, tell me how it can be done after the Government shall have been destroyed, when we are without the Constitution and without that unity of interest and feeling which still make us one people?

Sir, I have no hesitation in saying that if the Union of these States is to be finally destroyed, *because of the existence of African slavery*, it will sooner or later result in the final destruction of slavery. I repeat, it will result in abolishing it finally and forever.

I do not for a moment doubt but that the personal liberty laws will be repealed or properly modified within a few months. At all events, so soon as the people shall pass their judgment at the polls, I see that Rhode Island has taken the lead, and already repealed hers, and that steps have been taken in other States to accomplish a like result. It affords me pleasure to state that the Republican and Democratic parties in the free States are ready and willing so to amend the Constitution as to render it impossible for any one to believe that the people of the North desire to interfere with slavery in the States. This will do much good, and will greatly tend to the restoration of peace between the sections.

The Constitution declares that you shall surrender such persons as have escaped from service or labor from one State into another. We can alter and change the present fugitive slave law

so as to make it if possible more effective, and at the same time to render it less offensive to the people of the free States.

We are told in the South that it is the intention of the Republican party to abolish slavery in the States where it now exists, and that therefore protection to our property, to our families, requires us to resist that party to the extent of overthrowing the Government! Our people are made to believe this charge. You can allay that fear, you can remedy this cause of complaint without the sacrifice of principle or consistency. You have it now in your power to do it, and I appeal to you with the utmost confidence to give us an amendment to the Constitution to meet this cause of complaint. You declare the complaint unfounded, and insist that the Constitution is sufficient as it is. Then justice to yourselves requires that you should not hesitate in giving us this amendment, which we all admit is only rendering the present Constitution more specific and plain. By so doing you will put this branch of the controversy forever at rest. Do this, and adjust the territorial question, and you will not only restore peace to the country, but you will, as was said by my friend from North Carolina, (Mr. GILMER,) furnish a political winding sheet for disunionists, fanatics, and traitors, North and South.

There are various ways of adjusting the vexed, yet abstract question of slavery in the territories. It matters but little how it is settled so far as the extension of slavery is concerned. Yet the principle involved has been the cause of much of our present trouble. I have always believed that it mattered not so much *how* you settled the question if you would adhere to the adjustment after it was made.

My honorable friend from North Carolina, (Mr. GILMER,) gave you a few days ago an illustration of this territorial question, which, for fairness, was, in my judgment, unanswerable. Suppose, said he, there was on the one side of a certain line eighteen farmers, and on the other side fifteen, and not having land sufficient to carry on their farming operations, they should purchase another tract of land with their common money, would it be right for either party in such case to deny participation in the cultivation of that land to the other? Certainly not. Why not then, since the territories of the United States belong alike to the people of the North and the people of the South, grant that there shall be a line run like that of the Missouri compromise of 36° 30' north latitude, such a plan as is proposed in the original Crittenden resolutions. I speak particularly of the Crittenden resolutions, because they have apparently aroused more public attention than any other pending plan of adjustment. They have been read and considered by the people, North, South, East, and West. The general impression seems to be that they will satisfy reasonable men everywhere. I can vouch for the fact, that this plan will satisfy the border States, Tennessee and North Carolina, in which the decisive battle for the Union is now being fought. Why not then adopt this plan of settlement? Mr. SEWARD, and other gentlemen

professing like principles with himself, admit that the Supreme Court of the United States has, in effect, decided that slavery exists in every inch of territory belonging to the United States. That is the highest tribunal known to our Constitution and laws, and in questions involving a construction of the Constitution, it is the court of final resort. Why not settle this slavery question then at once upon the admissions made on all sides, and relieve the country from the fearful agitation which now shakes it "from turvet to foundation stone?" If you are not willing to adopt the Crittenden resolutions, then adopt the propositions submitted by my colleague, (Mr. ETHERIDGE,) which are substantially the border State propositions. And if you cannot do this, you ought not to refuse adopting the measures reported by the gentleman from Ohio, (Mr. CORWIX,) the Chairman of the committee of thirty-three. Admit New Mexico as a State into the Union, with her laws protecting slavery. But I see that my hour has nearly expired, and I can only take time to say that I will give my support to any proposition that will fairly, honorably, and finally settle those disturbing questions which so fearfully distract the peace of the country.

A word more, and I am done. The withdrawal of a State from this hitherto happy political family, is suggestive of painful reflections. It is quite as absurd and unaccountable as would be the conduct of that father, who, with his wife and children, was securely sheltered within a comfortable habitation, with every comfort and luxury which could add to their happiness, deliberately walking out, firing their dwelling and consigning it to the flames, without having made a single provision for the construction of a new abode, or for protection against the fierce storms of Heaven. (Applause.)

In conclusion, I appeal to my Republican friends to do their duty, under a sense of their great responsibilities, and according to the dictates of a generous magnanimity. They have the power to restore peace to our unhappy country, and I confidently believe you will show

your willingness to do so. I implore you, in behalf of our common country, that you will not stand hesitating, in such an hour as this, upon mere abstract and impracticable issues. When you follow the Constitution, you surrender no principle, nor are you false to any platform of your party. Let us, Mr. Speaker, pass the Crittenden resolutions, or any other proposition which will conciliate our divided people, and attach them once more to this Union as with hooks of steel. Let us do our whole duty in this dread emergency, and joy and gladness will once more pervade the limits of our whole country. Your noble conduct will then be hailed with shouts by a rejoicing people, who will attest their gratitude by the ringing of bells, the booming of cannon, the flying of canvas, and every token that a grateful people can manifest to the benefactors of mankind.

Let us not deceive ourselves with any such delusion as a reconstruction of the Government, in the event of a separation of the North and the South. Dismemberment will not be followed by a reunion of these States. Disunion means war—civil war—and fraternal blood cannot reunite us in the bonds of Union and brotherly love. Sir, these disunion, seceding Democrats broke up their party at Charleston. They cannot now reconstruct a political organization. The very spirit of disunion forbids it; and how can we expect the wanton destroyers of our present Union to reconstruct it when it has been torn to pieces. The idea is ridiculous. No man should permit himself to be thus deceived. I warn the honest masses of the country against this attempt to mislead them.

Mr. Speaker, I never have, nor I never will, utter one word designed to alienate one portion of our country from the other. Should I ever so far forget myself as to attempt writing or speaking, a line or a word, against the union of these States, or in behalf of those who now seek the overthrow of the Government, I trust my tongue and arm may become palsied and motionless. Let me die, as I have lived, a citizen of the free United States of America.

APPENDIX.

NOTE.—By the rules of the House, limiting the time of each member to one hour, it was impossible for me to refer to the opinions of Washington and Jackson; I, therefore, append to my remarks the following:

Extract from Washington's Farewell Address.

"But it is easy to foresee, that from different causes, and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed; it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as a palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts." * * *

Again, in the same address, he says:

"In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as matters of great concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations—*Northern* and *Southern*, *Atlantic* and *Western*; whence designing men may endeavor to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart-burnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a woeful lesson on this head. They have seen in the negotiation by the executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the general government and in the Atlantic States, unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi. They have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain, and that with Spain, which secure to them everything

they could desire in respect to our foreign relations toward confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely, for the preservation of these advantages, on the Union by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to these advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren and connect them with aliens? * * *

Extract from the Proclamation of President Jackson, December 11, 1832.

"The Constitution of the United States then forms a Government, not a league; and whether it be formed by compact between the States, or in any other manner, its character is the same. It is a Government in which all the people represented, which operates directly on the people individually, not upon the States—they retained all the power they did not grant. But each State having expressly parted with so many powers, as to constitute jointly with the other States a single nation, cannot from that period possess any right to secede, because such secession does not break a league, but destroys a unity of a nation; and any injury to that unity is not only a breach, which would result from the contravention of a compact, but it is an offence against the whole Union. To say that any State may at pleasure secede from the Union, is to say that the United States are not a nation, because it would be a solecism to contend that any part of a nation might dissolve its connexion with the other parts, to their injury or ruin, without committing any offence. Secession, like any other revolutionary act, may be morally justified by the extremity of oppression; but to call it a constitutional right, is confounding the meaning of terms, and can only be done through gross error, or to deceive those who are willing to assert a right, but would pause before they made a revolution, or incur the penalties consequent on a failure. Because the Union was formed by compact, it is said the parties to that compact may, when they feel themselves aggrieved, depart from it, but it is precisely because it is a compact that they cannot." * * *

Again, he says in the same proclamation:

"For the dream of a separate independence—a dream interrupted by bloody conflicts with your neighbors, and a vile dependence on foreign power—if your leaders could succeed in establishing a separation, what would be your situation? Are you united at home? Are you free from apprehension of civil discord with all its fearful consequences? Do our neighboring republics, every day suffering some new revolution, or contending with some new insurrection—do they excite your envy? But the dictates of a high duty oblige me solemnly to announce that

you cannot succeed. The laws of the United States must be executed. I have no discretionary power on the subject; my duty is emphatically pronounced in the Constitution. Those who told you that you might peaceably prevent their execution, deceived you; they could not have been deceived themselves. They know that a forcible opposition could alone prevent the execution of the laws, and they know that such opposition must be repelled. Their object is disunion; but be not deceived by names; disunion by armed force is *treason*. Are you really ready to incur its guilt? If you are, on the heads of the instigators of the act be the dreadful consequences; on their heads be the dishonor; but on yours may fall the punishment; on your unhappy State will inevitably fall all the evils of the conflict you force upon the government of your country. It cannot accede to the mad project of disunion, of which you would be the first victims; its first magistrate cannot, if he would, avoid the performance of his duty; the consequences must be fearful for you, distressing to your fellow-citizens here, and to the friends of good government throughout the world." * * * *

Gen. Jackson, in his nullification message of January 16, 1833, says:

"The right of the people of a single State to absolve themselves at will, and without the consent of the other States, from their most solemn obligations, and hazard the liberties and happiness of the millions composing this Union, cannot be acknowledged. Such authority is believed to be utterly repugnant, both to the principles upon which the general government is constituted, and to the objects which it is expressly formed to attain."

In conclusion, he says:

"I have so much cause to love, and for the

American people, whose partiality honored me with their highest trust, I have determined to spare no effort to discharge the duty which, in this conjuncture, is devolved upon me. That a similar spirit will actuate the representatives of the American people is not to be questioned; and I fervently pray that the Great Ruler of nations may so guide your deliberations, and our joint measures, as that they may prove salutary examples, not only to the present, but to the future times; and solemnly proclaim that the Constitution and the laws are supreme, and the *Union indissoluble*."

Letter from Gen. Jackson to Rev. Mr. Crawford of Georgia.

WASHINGTON, May 1, 1833.

* * * "I have had a laborious task here, but nullification is dead, and its actors and courtiers will only be remembered by the people to be execrated for their wicked designs to sever and destroy the only good Government on the globe, and that prosperity and happiness we enjoy over every other portion of the world. Haman's gallows ought to be the fate of all such ambitious men, who would involve their country in civil war, and all the evils in its train, that they might reign and ride on its whirlwinds and direct the storm. The free people of these United States have spoken, and consigned these wicked demagogues to their proper doom. Take care of your nullifiers; you have them among you; let them meet with the indignant frowns of every man who loves his country. The tariff, it is now known, was a mere pretext. * * * * * Therefore, the tariff was only the pretext, and disunion and a Southern Confederacy the real object. The next pretext will be the negro or slavery question. * * * * *

"ANDREW JACKSON."

